

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
**URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** July 5, 2012

**Meeting No.:** 149

---

**Project:** Harbor Point P.U.D.

**Phase:** Revised Master Plan

**Location:** Dock Street and Caroline Street

---

**PRESENTATION:**

Jonathan Flesher, representing Harbor East Development Group; informed The Panel of recent community meetings concerning the proposed revisions to the master plan which include the reconfiguration of the building and open space plan, changes in massing and an increase in density. Matt Poe, Architect with ASG, indicated that the proposed density consisted of 1.8 million square feet of office and retail use with an additional 1.15 million square feet of residential and hotel use. Utilizing a three dimensional massing model, Mr. Poe described the massing approach in which the buildings on the east side of the development (Buildings 6,8, and 9) established a base consistent in height to the existing Morgan Stanley building (Building 7). Mr. Poe presented a series of bird's eye perspectives from Caroline Street looking west along Block Street, Dock Street looking south along Point Street, and Dock Street looking south along Willis to describe the nature of the streetscape. Jonathan Ceci, Landscape Architect with ASG, described the proposed open space system linked by a network of interconnected streets and the waterfront promenade. He presented additional development plans for the Central Square, West Terrace and Great Lawn open space areas.

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL:**

Although the Design Team verbally acknowledged some of the Panel's concerns from the June 14, 2012 Working Session, there appeared to be little changes to the revised master plan addressing massing and streetscape issues. The Design Team did not address key issues concerning placement and massing of the Exelon tower, streetscape character and scale along Dock Street, and the juxtaposition of Buildings 1 and 2 as a "gateway" from the Central Avenue bridge extension into the site. The Panel felt the bird's eye perspectives did not present the project massing and streetscape character in a positive light and lacked the needed specificity that requested street sections could have provided. Based upon the presentation, the Panel expressed the following concerns and offered specific recommendations:

## **MASSING:**

- Although pleased with the massing of Buildings 6, 8, and 9 in establishing a base contextually consistent with the heights of the existing Morgan Stanley and Bond Street Wharf buildings, the Panel continues to raise serious concerns about the massing of the Exelon Tower as it relates to the scale and character of Dock and Point Streets and as an unarticulated bulk form. The Panel strongly recommends that an appropriately scaled and articulated base be established and that the upper portions of the tower rest on and rise from this base, setback from Dock and Point Streets.
- The Panel recommends that massing and design guidelines be established as part of the Master Plan document to ensure that the towers projected for Blocks 1, 2, and 3 promote an articulated vertical read, reduce the potential visual impact of the proposed large building footplates and insure a more positive predictable outcome.
- The Panel expressed concern about the height, scale and juxtaposition of the towers proposed on Blocks 1 and 2 as they may act as an imposing gateway into the project from Inner Harbor East and the Central Avenue extension. Recognizing that the Master Plan can promote multiple iconic opportunities, the Panel urged the Design Team to shift the proposed 350 foot high tower from Block 2 to Block 3, thus reducing the height and impact of Block 2 on Dock and Point Streets.
- A comparison of the existing PUD massing/height diagrams and the new proposed PUD massing/height diagrams is requested of the Design Team.

## **OPEN SPACE:**

- Although pleased with the reconfiguration of the open space network and the potential for a variety of spaces with different public purposes, the Panel expressed concern that the 9.3 acres of designated open space not be compromised as the Master Plan is implemented over time. Despite the verbal assurances of the Design Team that no commitment to lacrosse or active sports has been assigned to the Great Lawn open space, the Panel believes the Master Plan document must provide written assurances that the general public has full access to all 9.3 acres of public open space.
- Although pleased with the scale and orientation of the Central Square, The Panel encouraged the Design Team to provide additional study and clarity to the western edge and terminus of the open space framed by building Blocks 2 and 3. As an important “portal” framing views of the harbor to the west, the relationship between Block 2 and 3 could be more civic and unifying, recalling the grand arch

at Row's Wharf in Boston as appropriate precedent. If a future upper level pedestrian connection is required between Blocks 2 and 3, it should be incorporated into the portal element at the pinch point between the two buildings. Such a gesture would eliminate the current proposed elevated pedestrian bridge across the wide expanse of the West Terrace.

- The Panel expressed concern about the terminus of the Central Square and Block Street on Caroline and Thames Street. In recommending further study, the Panel suggested that the sharp corner of Block 9 at Caroline and Block Streets could be carved back creating an civic/open space and traffic circle around the existing one story historic building.
- The Panel continued to express concern about the need and scale of the auto drop off areas between Block 2 and 3 and Blocks 5 and 6. With respect to Blocks 2 and 3, the Panel recommended that auto drop off opportunities be provided along Point Street and eliminate auto access into the West Terrace open space. The access street that loops around Block 4, could provide an opportunity for auto drop off to the north of Block 5 and eliminate the vehicular dominated drop off court presently located between Blocks 5 and 6.
- With respect to the nature of the open space between Blocks 5 and 6, the Panel recommended a similar approach as the West Terrace, with a terraced lawn serving as a natural amphitheater providing unobstructed views to the harbor.
- The Panel urged the Design Team to consider stepping back the southern edge of Block 5 to improve the visual and physical connections between the park to the east and the great lawn to the west of Block 5.
- To better understand the open space, as the massing model did not accurately reflect the raised plyth above parking; the Panel requested additional site sections:
  - Thru the West Terrace to the water's edge
  - Thru the great lawn to the water's edge, and
  - Thru the park between Block 5 and 6 to the water's edge.

These sections would also help the Panel and Planning Department to understand the relationship of the promenade to the water at key points.

### **STREETSCAPE:**

To better understand the scale and character of the streetscape, the Panel requested detailed street sections:

- Thru Dock Street between Block 1 and Living Classroom Campus
- Thru Point Street between Blocks 1 and 2,
- Thru Willis Street between Blocks 1 and 9,

- Thru Block Street between Blocks 8 and 9
- Thru Caroline Street between Block 9 and existing development to the East

It is expected that these sections will specify the width of proposed sidewalk, landscape zones and opportunities for outdoor restaurant seating as well as instances where parallel parking or auto drop off lanes will occur.

### **SUSTAINABILITY:**

The Panel encouraged the Design Team to explore the opportunity to create an “Eco-District” integrated at the Master Planning level. This holistic approach could better inform the design of the open space, particularly along the promenade and water’s edge. A section, at least diagrammatic, showing the stormwater and drainage systems and how they work with the existing cap and the drainage/outlets at the edge of the site within the promenade easement area.

### **COMMUNITY:**

Ms. Carolyn Boitnott, community member of the Waterfront Partnership, spoke briefly at the end of the presentation to express her concern with the additional density on the site.

### **ACTION:**

The Panel withheld a recommendation for approval and requests an additional presentation by the Design Team.

### **Attending:**

Matt Poe, Jonathan Ceci, Troy Marrocco, Kate Ries, Andrew Watkins – ASG  
 Jonathan Flesher, Marco Greenberg – Harbor East Development Group  
 Laurie Schwartz – Waterfront Partnership  
 Barbara Valeri – Towers at Harbor Court  
 Carolyn Boitnott – Waterfront Coalition  
 Mark Reatter – Baltimore Brew  
 Ed Gunts – Baltimore Sun  
 Al Barry – AB Associates  
 Mackenzie Paull – DPOB  
 Bill Cunningham – Living Classrooms Foundation  
 Darrell Doan – BDC

Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Tamara Woods, Wolde Ararsa, Laurie Feinberg, Eric Tiso, Alex Hoffman, RJ Koscielniak, Jill Lemke – Planning

Ms. Eig, Messrgs. Cameron, Burns\*, Bowden - Panel